1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

273 the juice of a fern to "make the bear red," is fermented in wooden troughs from 5 to 6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m.) long made of tree stumps hollowed out by burning and chopping, then closed at both ends with wax. To accelerate fermentation, the beverage is heated every 3d day with red-hot stones and then covered with pieces of bark.

COMMUNICATION

202 The *Caingang* leave messages in symbolic code for those who will follow the same path. A stick with honey indicates where a bees nest has been found; dolls and sticks represent a feast to which some group is being invited; an inclined stick shows the time of day at which some event took place; feathers scattered on the ground tell of a successful hunting party, etc. (Maniser, 1930, p. 790). Lozano (1873, 1:425) stated that to declare war, the *Guayaná* (i. e., the *Caingang*) stuck an arrow into a tree near a path followed by their enemies. [574] A circle of maize cobs on the ground or hanging from a tree was an invitation to a drinking bout.

RELIGION

771 776 **Religious beliefs.**—The *Aweikoma* conceive the world to be strongly animistic, peopled with ghosts (kupléng) and spirits (nggfyédn) of all sorts who dwell in trees, rocks, mountains, stars, winds, and in large and small animals. To meet a spirit is, as a rule, an ominous event. But spirits may be friendly and appear to a man to offer their aid. Those who are assisted in hunting by a guardian spirit share with it the game which they have killed. A man may even adopt a spirit child and place it in his wife's womb.

825 *Aweikoma-Caingang* share the widespread belief that all animals have "masters," that is to say, spirits that control and protect them. Such spirits are willing to give up some of their kin to satisfy men's needs, but are angered if people destroy them wantonly or if hunters refuse an animal "offered" to them.

● 756 **Shamanism.**—The *Caingang* shaman consults spirits at night, puffing his pipe until he is surrounded by a cloud of smoke. The spirits talk to him in long whistles and tell him where to find a favorable hunting ground or abundant honey. They may also reveal the outcome of an undertaking involving the band.

755 757 Shamans are also doctors, but this role is less conspicuous among the *Caingang* than elsewhere and is even absent among the *Caingang* of Palmas and of São Paulo. Among the decadent *Aweikoma-Caingang*, observed by Henry (1941, p. 76), shamans only treated members of their immediate family and did not receive a fee for their cures. The shaman knows many magic remedies, generally herbs, the virtues

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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monsters at night have more definite content. This is consonant with the fact that the Kaingáng have devoted much more interest and imagination to the elaboration of the fearful aspects of their supernatural world than to the benign.

With Kenéðn's simple vision of Toad compare the following horrible dream that Vomblé had of the *ŋgŋiyáda* before Véye died: "I was the first one to see that the *ŋgŋiyáda* ate Véye. I saw the *ŋgŋiyáda* come with Véye. I saw that they were going to kill him, and I said to them, 'Why do you want to kill Véye?' But they said nothing. Then they said, 'He is a pig.' 'It is Véye [said Vomblé]; I used to go around with him.' They took hoes and led Véye off. I said, 'Leave him alone.' But they killed Véye with hoes. 'Why did you kill him?' 'It is a pig.' 'It is a human being, and it is taboo for you to eat it.' They seized his feet and tore him apart. I protected him. I thought I was dreaming. They put salt on him and ate him. When they ate him, it was taboo. I almost vomited. 'Come and eat [they said], it is like tapir's marrow.' But it was capavary.[33] Then I vomited and sat up. I ate dirt and almost vomited. Next day I told Véye, 'They roasted your ribs with salt,' but Véye said I was lying. Three days later he died."

Horror and the impulses to murder and cannibalism which the Kaingáng constantly and compulsively express are much more congenial to their imagination than the warm relationships with beneficent spirits of the natural world. It is true that guardian spirits are often mentioned in Kaingáng folklore, but most frequently simply as incidents in a murder tale. Stories whose central theme is a relationship with a guardian spirit are extremely rare. Being "shown" a spirit was as simple an experience as seeing it oneself. One day while an Indian was out with someone who had been seeing a spirit, the shaman would say to him casually, "Go over there and shoot those howler monkeys," and always after that the Indian would see supernatural Howler Monkey and find howler monkeys very easily. Such an experience might be accompanied by darkness and wind, but generally it was not.

"Yokégn was a shaman. He saw Fish and Wasp. He went hunting, and when he came back, he said to his wife: 'Let us go to the fish I saw. I'm going to get some for them [the children].' So his wife emptied a basket and carried it along with her. When they reached the spot, the water was shallow and there were some [fish] in it. Then he said to her, 'Come over here and have a look.' When she approached, she saw its men[34] in there. She stood there looking, and at last, he [her husband] asked, 'Did you see?' 'Yes,' she replied. 'Let us go now to the other fish that one eats all the time. They are good. Catch some of them.' So she took her basket and entered [the stream]. The shallow water came toward her in waves. She put her

[33] An amphibious rodent (*Hydrochoerus capybara*) two feet long and twenty inches high.
[34] Fish in anthropomorphic form.

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Awe/koma

basket in the water for the fish, and they came along and plumped into it. He showed her so that he and she might both see it all the time." The essential features of this very mild incident are the simple nature of the instruction and the division of the fish species into supernatural untouchables and natural touchables. This was characteristic of every animal category—some of it was recognizable by the shaman as supernatural, and the rest was natural and might be killed and eaten. When we remember that the spirit a person sees constantly is his close friend and companion, we can readily understand this cautious examination of the scene by the shaman and his painstaking selection of the animals to be killed and those to be left alone. Some of them are children of his friend, and the rest are simply animals which the spirit gives to him for food.

Spirits control their species and keep them in inclosures from which they let them out from time to time. When they are angered, either because too many have been killed or because some have not been killed, they close them up again and animals become scarce. Failure to bring down an animal is an unfortunate occurrence which annoys the spirit, but refusal to take a tapir or deer or any other animal which the *ngpiyida* offers is tantamount to refusing food from a human benefactor and can have but one outcome, death. Whoever turns away from quarry pointed out by a spirit is bound to fall ill and die.

The more we examine the ways in which the Kaingáng maintained the bonds that united them with supernatural benefactors, the more we discover that they duplicated in any number of details the complex of relationships and feelings through which security was maintained in their own society. One more point may be added. Over and over again, malevolent supernaturals are referred to by the sinister term of "different thing," but guardian spirits were never called by this term; for "different things" are dangerous things, and guardian spirits were friendly and helpful.

Like most primitive peoples, the Kaingáng obtain from spirits some powers to cure disease, but this side of Kaingáng supernaturalism was very slightly developed. In many cultures in which religious values rate high, the powers to cure and kill supernaturally bring great rewards. But the Kaingáng never killed supernaturally; the most they did in this direction was to throw people into a deep sleep so that they could murder them with lance or club. They did cure through the agency of the supernatural, but the shaman received no pay for his efforts, and his practice was generally limited to his own immediate family. The ministerings of the shaman were viewed as attentions naturally received from a close relative. No shaman ever extended the benefits of his practice outside his own extended family. Kaingáng culture did not define achievement in supernatural terms—charismatic powers of any kind were not even something to boast about or to plume oneself on. The most that a very powerful shaman got from his

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fellows was a certain awe while he was alive and dread when he was dead. 756 ●
Almost anywhere in North America, the ethnologist may obtain for the asking stories of shamans with great powers to cure, even where he does not learn the esoteric lore accompanying them. Among the Kaingáng such stories do not exist at all. After diligent questioning, one does find out that Chu used to cure people, and that once Kemblén treated Klendó and he recovered; but supernatural healing was not a theme that the culture elaborated. [539]

Kemblén was one of those rare individuals about whom supernatural influences seemed to cluster like lines of force about a magnet. He had lost an arm because of his refusal of power from Snake, who therefore bit him in anger. As he grew older he gradually accumulated the powers of Quatí, Monkey, Wind, and Fish, and in the end this was his undoing, for Quatí was out of sorts with him one day for some unknown reason, and he fell sick and died. Before he died, he showed two of his daughters, Anggló and Chantágn, his supernatural remedies. One day, after I had been among the Kaingáng for many months, Chantágn came to me, trembling with anxiety, and announced that for a price she would tell me about her father's medicine. There was no doubt about Chantágn's sincerity, and she was in real fear that her father might become aware of the fact that she was revealing his medicines and kill her. Although I ordinarily left windows open on the rare occasions when women were in my house, Chantágn's fear was so obvious and painful that I carefully closed all the doors and windows so that *aggiyáda* could neither see nor hear what was going on, and prepared myself for a revelation.

At last, still trembling, Chantágn took out a little package wrapped in paper, unfolded it, and disclosed two plants, telling as she did so that one was to cure sickness in children and one was for sore eyes and that they should be pounded up and mixed with water. That was all—she asked her price and was prepared to leave. What a cold bath this experience was to me! For months I had been burrowing in search of just this kind of information with little success, and when at last Chantágn came to me straight from the source of power, I felt that surely now I should discover the real content of Kaingáng religion. I did, but it was little different from what I had known before. Naturally I questioned her. From her breathless replies in which one word stumbled on the heels of the next, I learned that Kemblén had received the medicines from Monkey when he was a *kátag*:[10] "'Give it to your children,' said Monkey. 'Apply it to their sides. Let them lie on their backs on a robe.' He said to Howler Monkey: 'Give it to me. When I see that they are sick I shall get it for them.' Then Howler Monkey cleared the ground and showed it to him." To Chantágn the whole potency of the curing was in the herbs she sold me.

[10] Any male between the ages of thirty-five or forty is a *kátag*.

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In all friendly relations a Kaingáng insists on superlatively developed emotional rapport and strong identification. A shaman's bond with the supernatural world was spun from the same emotional stuff as his tie with his fellow men, for he lived with the spirits, shared their food and his own, and adopted their children. Everything a shaman had from the supernatural he had by virtue of a strong and enduring emotional relationship with some supernatural being. After death he retained his connection with his guardian spirit, and even today the Kaingáng address their supplications directly to him, for he has real control over whatever forces the spirit directs. "Kukéye saw Howler Monkey. He died, and now whenever the others kill Howler Monkeys, they cry: *Yágn*, Kukéye, it is I. Protect me!"

When shamans performed acts which had been made possible by virtue of their connections with the supernatural, their associations with the spirit were made manifest. Since it was forbidden shamans to announce in so many words their actual relations with the spirit, they did it by means of stereotyped formulae which were direct enough but did not take the form of actual stories of their experiences. Instead of saying, "I have seen the spirit of Howler Monkey," the shaman asked a question which might best be translated, "Am I not probably the useful howler monkey?" And then he uttered its cry. This announcement was an affirmation or momentary actualization of his bond with the spirit. It was the shaman's deep emotional roots in the supernatural that made it possible for him to cure his patient, who was always a member of his own extended family and usually a very close relative. Thus, literally, deep spoke to deep, and through their intense and highly charged rapport, cure was effected.

Cisu was once married to Thalé, but she "threw him away" and married another. One day her son Kukéye was bitten by a snake. He lost consciousness and sang in his delirium. "When his relatives heard this, they wept. Thalé blew on him. She rushed around him and sang:

ẽng mbẽ thi nẽ
ẽng mbẽ thi nẽ
lẽ mbẽ kẽ nyang djẽ so ny
ẽng nggẽ ye tha tẽgn mẽ ny nggẽ mu ve
my dance place usual that about I dance
ẽng nggẽ kẽ ny ockẽ kẽtẽ kẽ ha wẽ ẽng nyatẽ
my dance and I fruit eat it my mouth
vẽlẽ ve[50]
fall (plural)

[50] Elements not accompanied by intelligent translations are either meaningless syllables to carry the melody or untranslatable grammatical particles.

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Then she went *hũ hũ hũ hũ*—she was imitating the macuca. She was saying in the song that the macuca was eating something. The food of the macuca is in its throat. That is what she meant by *nyatka vẽlẽ*." A free translation of the little song is: "I dance in my customary dance place, and as I dance, the fruit tumbles into my mouth." The symbolism of the song and cry is transparent to the Kaingáng. "Probably," said my informant, "she is telling in her song about having seen macuca dancing. Probably she used to dance with them."

When Thalú had finished, she called to her former husband Chu: "'Come and look him over.' He came over and looked at Kukéye, who was lying on a robe. He rubbed his hands over him and then blew on him. Then he uttered the cry of the howler monkey, *ngga ngga ngga ngga*. He spat all over Kukéye." He prophesied that the patient would live, saying, "I have seen that my offspring will eat pine pollen." Now was the time for Chu to announce his bond with the supernatural, and he cried, "Am I the voice of the useful *cipo* [vine]!" meaning by that that he "was" the howler monkey that sits upon the cipo. "He was saying that he was a supernatural being. Then he stopped and said to his relatives, 'Wash him with some other remedy.' So they washed him with *tatalo*. Kukéye went *'Ho'* and vomited blood. He opened his eyes. Chu had thrown all the poison out of him."

English is poor in words indicating existence. In English we may say, "It is a tapir," and to us this simple statement will seem clear and definitive. But to a Kaingáng Indian the statement, "It is a tapir," would seem extraordinarily vague. He would want to know whether the tapir was standing up or lying down, whether it was walking around or standing still. In the Kaingáng language there are words meaning "to be" that convey in addition some such concepts as these. There is still another that implies probability and blurs the edges of existential categories. All of these can have but one translation in English—"to be." When Chu says, "Am I the voice of the useful cipo?" he frames his utterance in the category last mentioned and in this way does nothing more than indicate his bond with the howler monkey.[11] The expression itself is really untranslatable; but its general feeling is one of indefinite assertion. It by no means implies that Chu is a howler monkey.

A striking example of the close bond between a shaman and the phenomenon from whose spirit he once obtained supernatural powers was provided me one winter's day during a storm. Kenhlén, who numbered wind among his many guardian spirits, has been dead a number of years, but still his *kupléng*[12] is powerful and may influence the natural world to the injury

[11] Because the howler monkey habits on to the vine and makes a noise.
[12] Ghost-soul.

of men. One day Klendó, a man about sixty-five, and I were sitting together in my little house discussing the *kwplémg*. Gradually clouds gathered in the west. The wind began to mount, and at last with a rush the storm swept up the valley. As the wind increased in violence the look of anxiety intensified on Klendó's face. He gazed with frightened eyes through the window before us, and his mind wandered as he watched in fascination the rivulets of water trickling under the frame. At last the catch on the window that faced the wind snapped, and with a burst of thunder and lightning and a swirl of wind and rain, the window was flung open, drenching the house in an instant and sending my papers flying. Klendó was seized with acute terror, and jumping up with more animation than he had shown in weeks, he dashed to the door, opened it a crack, and bellowed: "My *kókli*,[28] I am afraid of you; so stop! My *kókli*, you are angry with me; so you have made the storm!" Thus he shouted to his *kókli*, his second father, a man with whom he had had a most friendly relationship while he was alive.

"Why was he angry with you?" I asked. "I don't know," he replied, with that petulance that is so characteristic of the Kaingáng when they are frightened. But in the afternoon he had an explanation, for he had stopped to gossip and had learned that Kemblén's grandson had had a quarrel with Yukwáya that very day. Kemblén, "therefore, became angry with her [Yukwáya] and made it dark. Kemblén knew that Yukwáya was angry, and therefore it became dark."

In characteristic Kaingáng fashion, people fall sick and die either because they are attacked by some *nggiyádn* who wishes them ill or because they are seduced or "led off" by one who wants them for company. Thus the causes of illness and death are oriented toward both extremes of the Kaingáng world-view. In any event, the ultimate cause of death is complete soul-loss. Seduction is accomplished either through invitations to visit a "good country," i.e. where the hunting is good and the honey plentiful, or through sexual stimulation. When Vomblé's father tried to lure him away, it was through promises of plenty, but Klendó almost died because a female *nggiyádn* wanted him for a sex companion.

The defenses against soul-loss are very simple. The victim may simply say, "Let's go back," to those who wish to take him away, or he may renounce his connection with the *nggiyádn* if it happens to be an unconsummated sexual one. If it is consummated he is lost and soon dies. First he may go mad like Puklé, who copulated with a female *nggiyádn*, or he may rot inside, like Kulé. Whoever has intercourse with the supernatural will not burn easily on the funeral pyre, and he is an evil omen to his relatives. "One night," said Vomblé, "Kulé called out to her brother: 'Waipó,

[28] Ceremonial father.

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lift me up.' When he heard this, he woke up and took hold of her, lifted, 761
and set her down. Then she said to him, 'It seems to me that you copulated 996
with me,' but he replied: 'No! Probably *ngpĩyáda* copulated with you.'
She lay there awhile and at last died. When she was burnt, she exploded.
She was *sui* [an evil omen] to them. She lay on her back with her feet in
the air. She also said her husband [Véye] copulated with her; that is why
she died. Probably the *ngpĩyáda* looked like Véye. Her blood came out of
her vagina."

Another way of bringing back the errant *kupléng* is through calling it,
but it does not always return. "I saw Nggemó's *kupléng*," said Vomblé,
"before the Brazilians killed her. I got up at night when the moon was
high. Nggemó was sleeping a little to the side. Her *kupléng* sat up. I
thought it was she herself. It went out into the darkness. I thought she had
gone to urinate, and I waited for her to return. I was awake, and I looked
for her. I called out, 'Are you there?' 'Yes. When he [her infant] cried, I
sat up.' 'I thought you went that way, and I waited for you.' 'I didn't go;
I just sat up.' 'You went that way; I heard your noise.' Then Kuthógn [her
husband] rose and called Nggemó['s *kupléng*]: 'Come here, Nggemó,
come here! Come to the meat you put aside!' He was calling her *kupléng*,
but it probably did not come back, for nine days later the Brazilians killed
her." It is interesting that mortals often use the same inducement to lure
back the wandering *kupléng* as the *ngpĩyáda* do to draw it away; namely,
food. Through the promise of plenty the *kupléng* of a man is lured away
by the supernaturals; through food the soul of a dead child is induced to
return to its mother's womb, and it was through food that the *kupléng* of
Nggemó was tempted to return to Kuthógn.

Behind the *kupléng's* wish to snatch away its living relatives is its strong
attachment for them, but in the case of the ghost-soul of a dead enemy the
motivating force is revenge. When relatives lead off the unwilling *kupléng*
it is so that it may be cherished, but enemies seize the soul to punish the
body. So, also, when supernatural beings other than ghost-souls take away
kupléng, it is for similar reasons. Thus the Kaingáng imagination follows
out its pattern consistently both with *kupléng* and with all other *ngpĩyáda*.

Kupléng may seduce, "lead off," or capture the souls of mortals, but de- 755
vouring and shooting are the privilege of other *ngpĩyáda*. For devouring 996
there is no remedy—once a person is eaten, he is consumed and that is all,
but for shooting there is a cure, and that is extraction of the missile, a red-
dish, wormlike object. Anyone may summon back a wandering soul or
even cure sickness with an infusion of herbs or of bark scrapings, but only a
shaman who has seen supernatural Pain can extract *tãfyé*, the missiles
which are shot into people by the monster Yunggí or by Pain.

"Tunãñ was a shaman. She took out men's *tãfyé*. Her sister Kukú had 756

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crab that was so red, it seemed as if she had been burnt. She wept all night. Next day Tendó went to Kukú's mother and said, 'Why did she cry all night?' 'She cried all night because of her *thépé*.' Tendó looked at her feet. Then she fetched some water, put medicine in it, heated it, and washed Kukú's feet and rubbed them. She made her *thépé* come out by kneading it. She looked and put her mouth to it and bit out the thing. Kukú's mother did not watch, for she was making a shirt. Tendó bit out the thing—she bit out many, and said: '*Nyŋ*,[20] look here! This is what did it.' The *thépé* were red and she put them in the water. The *thépé* were red. Then she squeezed medicine over her and tied up the place."

In all *thépé* extractions there was always the use of warm water, the universal panacea, with or without a medicine, the kneading to the surface of the *thépé*, and finally extraction, not by sucking, but by seizing with the teeth and pulling—"biting," as the Kaingáng put it.

In our culture oral functions are often associated with ideas of destruction. Consider, for example, our vocabulary of oral destruction: "devour the enemy," "the jaws of death," "swallowed up in the sea," "biting humor," "eaten with rust," "gnawing hunger." Among the Kaingáng, however, oral destruction is relegated almost entirely to the realm of fantasy. The only beings that can actually destroy with the mouth are cannibalistic supernaturals and occasional masculine human characters in folklore. The situation in which oral functions are used for non-nutritional purposes on the human level is essentially a cherishing one—healing the sick. In curing, the Kaingáng spit, blow, and bite. A mother whose sick child refuses remedy or is too weak to nurse takes the medicine or food into her mouth and forces it between the child's lips. Women who esteem their husbands greatly chew their food for them. Although the cherishing motif predominates in oral behavior, there are two situations in which suggestions of oral annihilation appear. One is in the use of two curses[21] that are accompanied by spitting; the other is in the use of the term *nyat ka kléda*, mouth inside escape to escape out of the mouth, which is employed at times to mean escape from a tiger or from a human enemy, i.e. from a "different thing." It is striking that the Kaingáng rarely use the curses—I do not know of a single instance in which they actually were used, and I regard them not as weapons actually employed, but as techniques known to exist.

The kneading that precedes the extraction of the *thépé* is a special case

[20] Mother, or woman much older than the speaker.

[21] "So that they may go and die in one night they spit after them and say, 'Where you go day on this!' To lie down and die—that is a curse. They spit after him (and say), 'When you go may you do the same as *kénggléda* (a tree) and rot!' This *kénggléda* runs and falls at the slightest frost. They spit after him and he dies shortly."

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of the Kaingáng faith in the efficacy of "the laying on of hands." We already know what the multiplication of caresses means to the Kaingáng in the way of security, and the gentle application of warm infusions of herbs or bark to all parts of the body of a sick person is not different in kind from the reciprocal stroking of two young men lying in affectionate embrace. Still another way of curing the sick is to heat one's hands near the fire and lay them gently on the body of the patient. This high valuation of cutaneous contact is one aspect of the Kaingáng special interest in sensation.

But the Kaingáng do not only cure from without, they also cure from within; and to that end they administer a variety of herb and bark infusions in warm water. These are rubbed all over the surface of the body, for the Kaingáng cannot conceive of treating the inside of the body without also treating the outside.[22] Anyone at all may perform this tender and solicitous task, and it is no rarity to see a Kaingáng step aside from the trail to cut a few plants for someone else or to see him come back from the hunt with a handful of herbs for medicine. A number of these herbs are used as panaceas—they are applied with equal faith to relieve a headache or a pain in the chest or to heal a cut.[23]

Of all the herbs and barks that the Kaingáng use to treat the sick, one alone is based on something more than this kind of selection. The use of *dyólo nyo tói*, "tapir's raw food," rests on a strong sense of its vital power. Tapir's raw food grows everywhere in the Kaingáng country. It is the favorite eating of the tapir and enjoys a wider use as a remedy among the Kaingáng than any other plant in their medicinal catalogue. But this herb is used not only to cure sickness but also to prevent evil. It is spread over the body of a dead tapir to please its *kupléng* so that it will not take all the rest of its brethren with it and leave mankind to starve, and in the same way it is placed all around the body of a dead infant to induce its *kupléng* to return to its mother. When a widow's hair and nails are cut, they are mixed with tapir's raw food before they are thrown into the water, so that they will not rot; and when she returns to camp after her isolation, tapir's raw food is strewn in her path to drive off the *kupléng* of her husband. So,

[22] Nowadays they do swallow the white man's remedies without rubbing them over their bodies.

[23] Their use is based not on exact knowledge of their efficacy in specific cases but on the simple faith that they are beneficial. The employment of herbs in this naive empirical manner must lie at the roots of some of the great medicinal discoveries of primitive peoples, like quinine. Just as the Kaingáng scrape the bark of a number of trees and use them indiscriminately to relieve a variety of ills, the Indians of the interior of South America may have used the bark of the quina tree for a number of ailments until they observed that one disease in particular, malaria, yielded to it, whereas others did not. This marked the real discovery of quinine, one of the American Indian's great contributions to the relief of human suffering.